/31 cont./
865 693 Nevertheless, there are cases where the elder brother attempts to impose his authority and oblige a younger brother to obey his orders, building up his part. From ten years of age onward the relation between brothers and sisters becomes rougher and occasionally quarrelsome, but after passing puberty and initiation, when the girl has become a woman and the boy an adult, their relationship takes on a definite shape, to be reflected in the future friendship between the two and in the ties that will exist between the brothers and the children of the sisters, over whom they will exercise their authority and protection.

We have already described one of the aggressive acts between brothers on the part of the older toward the younger, in the theft of food behind the back of the mother or whoever represents authority /in the home/. There is another form of aggression which the younger child adopts in order to get what he wants from his elders and from his siblings: He throws himself on the ground, where he rolls and kicks, screaming and crying inconsolably. His mother punishes him to stop him from giving way to his bad temper, considering his action harmful because when big he might continue with his rages and while in that mood cause grave injury to his people and to himself. For in
●152 865 reality when the Guajiro becomes furious, he goes completely out of his mind and commits deeds he would not dream of doing in his proper senses. If he cannot get his way he becomes so
[762] angry /32/ that often he will hang himself, doing this in such a rage that he loses his instinct of self-preservation and even when he is half dead will insist on finishing himself off, so throwing the responsibility of his death onto the person who caused his bad temper. If his mother is unable to control these exhibitions of childish rage, it will continue with him during his youth and as a man will become increasingly worse, often causing him to leave home in the excess of his fury and giving rise to suicide when he is thwarted or opposed.

864 835 6. Delinquent acts that may appear among children about ten years old are the sexual relations between girls and their brothers when the latter are busy with their pastoral tasks and

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884 Toward the prepubertal age the boy begins to show his reaction to family punishments and controls, a liberating phase which culminates after puberty with the handing over of his animals when he marries, or before if his pastoral ability allows his taking full charge of them. Then, with his economic independence assured, he is freed from the discipline of the small family. He wants to figure as an adult and take an active part in the life of the community. For the male there is a difficulty as regards the coming of age because they have no initiation rite so that the time of his independence is subject to his economic circumstances and is in consequence elastic. On the other hand, in the case of women the biological phenomenon of menstruation marks the end of their childhood and their transformation to womanhood with all its privileges, rights, and duties.

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861 The mother and the persons charged with the care and training of the child not only make use of punishment to obtain his obedience and submission to traditional norms of conduct but also have recourse to other kinds of stimuli which we might call positive. For example, when the boy tends to cry overmuch and is cowardly when faced by some slight problem, he is told: "Don't cry so much. Are you a girl that you go about crying so much? We should send you to take part in a wake /velorlar/ (1)."

[764]
[152]

1. Velorlar is used to indicate attendance and participation in the wake for a dead person, during which those present weep mournfully over the corpse.

If the crying is caused by an injury which the mother had foreseen, she says to him: "I told you so; you alone are to blame; no one did you any harm so you need not cry as it is all

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583 836 the man feels satisfied, because the price paid included, tacitly, her virginity. If the woman's relatives do not handle the situation prudently, reprisals and hostilities may take place between the two groups. Also in these cases the man will claim the necklace which he gave the woman as a sign of their betrothal the day the marriage was arranged. But he does not do this with an eye to gain but to make the woman suffer some part of the humiliation /67/ he himself felt on learning of the deception. Furthermore, as the necklace is a sign of engagement, asking for its return resembles an act of breaking it, although, in point of fact, the woman continues to be tied to the man with matrimonial obligations.

At times the man will follow another norm of conduct, especially at the present time when this state of affairs occurs more frequently and the claims for compensation payment for this condition are losing importance: He himself assumes the punishment for the deception. He roughly inquires of the woman: "Why are you not a virgin when I bought you believing that you were? Why don't you say who possessed you before I did?" He goes from insult to action and beats the woman, who, recognizing her inferior situation does not dare to protest.

It is possible that the Indian will not at first go beyond insulting the woman in private, but under the influence of alcohol the [152] resentment grows out of hand, and it is then that, in the presence of his friends, he will recount his problem and complain. Not content with this, he makes up songs referring to the subject which contain insulting commentaries and will sing them to his wife when with his friends to humiliate her in front of them and so obtain some satisfaction for what he personally suffers. In this [578] state of drunkenness it is not uncommon that he will beat his wife, shielding himself from reproach by the fact that as he has not been repaid the part of the marriage payment due him, her relatives are not in a position to protest.

Often with time the matter gets forgotten, and it only crops up on certain occasions when they quarrelsomely bring up all the past with its emotional content, due to some disobedience on the

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764 551 the name of the dead man in front of anyone, again for fear of offending his relatives, /157/ who, although they may not be present, might be informed by someone looking for payment for talebearing.

764 One by one as the persons notified arrive, they express their sympathy. The form of doing so is as follows: The /dead man's/ kinsmen are seated on the ground, or nowadays more generally in the interior of the house (the new customs require the female relatives to remain inside the house seated on the floor, with their faces covered with a large cloth black like the robe they wear). When the outsider arrives he sits down beside them. Then begins the lamentation of the mourner, who mourns with his head bent forward, covered, as is his face. He cries for a more or less prolonged time, interspersing his weeping with short phrases which refer to his sorrow and his loss. He ends his lament, which is taken up by the visitor, and once he has finished they give the traditional Guajiro salutation, initiated by the mourner. They all begin to cry again in chorus, which they suspend to recount the process of the man's death in all its details.

Around the corpse are slung a series of hammocks at graded heights, which are occupied by the closest women relatives as they take turns in the weeping or by a newly arrived one, who, after expressing her sorrow to the family, must weep near the corpse, bending forward over the coffin and placing a hand on it, a magic action which will help her to dream of the deceased. In this position, the visitor, whether outsider or consanguineous relative, weeps in that tone and manner characteristic of the culture, which rather than weeping is like an intoned, melancholy complaint. The Guajiro men weep in a different manner, giving shouts of despair at intervals, without any definite timing. They do this standing up, bending over the coffin and covering their faces with a cloth, a hat, or a hand. On asking some outsiders, participants at a wake, how they were able to cry so intensely and realistically, they explained

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764 152 that it was not really for the dead man that they kept vigil, because many times he might be unknown to them, but for the evocation before the corpse of the total sufferings of their group and their personal sorrows.

While visitors and part of the maternal and closest paternal relatives take their places around the deceased in order to take their turn in keeping up continual wailing, the remaining relatives of the dead man comply with the norms of hospitality and courtesy customary on such occasions, which are to receive the sympathy of those who arrive, to serve drink to the men, and to constantly maintain the funeral spirit. The maternal relatives must attend to the distribution of the /158/ livestock of the dead man, a part of which it is customary to give to the visitors who come to offer their condolences.

764 554 A wake can and should be prolonged as long as the livestock of the deceased lasts, and in the event that these are too few to maintain the prestige of the status of the dead man's consanguineous relatives, recourse must be had to contributions from the latter. From their point of view, the veritable economic-social status of the dead man is shown by the slaughter and distribution of animals which is made at this moment; also, this has its effect on his life beyond the grave, as the livestock slaughtered and the funeral outfit form the basis of the deceased's status in his other life.

In La Guajira the deaths of some of the most outstanding clan chiefs are long remembered. It is recounted, for example, that the wake of the cacique José Dolores lasted two and a half months until the animals he owned were completely slaughtered and distributed among those who came to show their sympathy. The whole /population of the/ peninsula was mobilized to accompany his kinsmen. They say that no less than 30, 000 bolivars (Venezuelan money) were spent on eau de cologne to overcome the putrefaction and the bad odors given off by the corpse during such a long time in the hot climate.